

SHOAH MEMORIAL TRAIL IN LUXEMBOURG CITY

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The two-hour Shoah Memorial Trail in Luxembourg City offers an insight into the wiping out of Jewish life in Luxembourg by Nazi Germany. The non-profit associ-

ation *MemoShoah Luxembourg* initiated this memorial trail so that the fate of the approximately 4000 Jews who lived here on the day of the German invasion will be

remembered. The path leads past well-known and lesser-known places that played a key role in Luxembourg with regard to the Shoah.

SHOAH MEMORIAL TRAIL IN LUXEMBOURG CITY

Highlights

The History of Luxembourg City under Nazi Germany's Occupation

Tour

On foot

Duration & length

2 hours / 3 km

Audioguide

izi.travel

More information

memoshoah.lu
luxembourg-city.com



1 Central Station - Deportations

The tour starts in the glass hall of the train station in front of the memorial plaque.

1 Central Station - Deportations

Of the almost 4000 Jewish residents of Luxembourg at the beginning of the war, only about 60 were still living in Luxembourg in so-called "mixed marriages" at the end of the war. On 10 May 1940, the day of the German invasion, several hundred Jewish families had already fled to France and Belgium. When the racial laws and other anti-Jewish measures were introduced in September 1940, there were still about 1800 Jewish people living in Luxembourg. That is when the emigrations and, from 16 October 1941, the deportations to the East, namely to the concentration and extermination camps began. A total of 658 persons of Jewish origin were deported directly from Luxembourg to the East. 44 of them survived the Shoah, which corresponds to a survival rate of 7%. In total, it is estimated that more than 1300 Jewish victims who were living in the Grand Duchy at the time of the German invasion were murdered by the Nazi regime. Those who were not deported from Luxembourg were in many cases picked up by local police and German occupying forces in France and Belgium and deported from there to extermination camps.



2 ARBED building: 19, avenue de la Liberté: former seat of the Nazi civil administration of Luxembourg

Follow Avenue de la Liberté ("Nei Avenue") towards the upper town until Place des Martyrs.

2 Former seat of the Nazi civil administration of Luxembourg (1940-1944): 19, avenue de la Liberté

After the invasion of German troops on 10 May 1940, Luxembourg was initially placed under German military administration, which was replaced by a German civil administration in July 1940. On 21 July 1940, Gustav Simon, NSDAP Gauleiter in the Gau Koblenz-Trier, was appointed Chief of the Civil Administration (CdZ) in Luxembourg. It was Simon's task to integrate the Luxembourgers into the German *Volksgemeinschaft*, the racially pure German national community. The idea was to completely "germanise Luxembourg" and to eradicate everything "foreign". The institutions of the sovereign state of Luxembourg were dissolved. As a convinced anti-Semite and National Socialist, Simon wanted to make Luxembourg "free of Jews" as quickly as possible. Until the liberation of Luxembourg by the Allies on 10 September 1944, the seat of the civil administration was located in the north wing of the central administration building of the ARBED steel company. As early as 6 September 1940, Simon introduced the Nuremberg Race Laws in Luxembourg and ordered the first measures regarding Jewish assets ("Aryanisation"). New anti-Jewish measures continued to be added all the time.



3 Former Jewish school: 72, boulevard de la Pétrusse

Continue along Avenue de la Liberté and turn left into Rue Goethe.



4 Villa Pauly: 57, boulevard de la Pétrusse: former Gestapo headquarters

3 Jewish school: 72, boulevard de la Pétrusse (then number 74)

At the beginning of the 1940/41 school year, all schools in the country were required to draw up lists of names of Jewish pupils. From 1 November 1940, Jewish pupils were excluded from the public schools. However, the Chief of the Civil Administration ordered compulsory education for Jewish children aged 6-16 in Jewish schools. Due to a shortage of teaching staff, the consistory of the Jewish Community of Luxembourg was only able to found and operate one such school. It was located at Petrusring 74 (today 72, boulevard de la Pétrusse), a building which was used as a cultural centre and prayer place by Jewish immigrants from the East during the 1930s. Three classrooms were set up here. Initially, 80 to 100 pupils between the ages of 6 and 14 attended the Jewish school. They were taught in mixed two-year classes. The children's everyday life was marked by a high fluctuation of the school population,



5 Old Synagogue (Corner Rue Aldringen/ Rue Notre-Dame across from Casino)



6 Albert Nussbaum: the Luxembourgish Emigration Helper (former clothing shop "Palais de l'Habillement": 13, rue du Marché-aux-Herbes)



7 Location of Luxembourg's Synagogue from 1823: 6, rue de la Congrégation



8 Kaddish Monument: Memorial for Shoah victims, Boulevard Roosevelt

due to expulsions, emigration and flights. The school's resources were scarce: lack of teachers, lack of materials and bureaucratic hurdles made learning conditions difficult. Since the anti-Jewish measures forbade Jews to enter public places, streets and roads between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m., the consistory had to apply for exemption permits so that both teachers and pupils were able to reach school on time. The school's curriculum is noteworthy: unlike the public schools in Luxembourg, where French lessons were forbidden, French was taught here from grade 3 and English from grade 6. This exceptional permission was granted because it was thought that Jews had to leave Luxembourg anyhow.

Follow the Boulevard de la Pétrusse. Villa Pauly is on your left.

4 Villa Pauly - former Gestapo headquarters (1940-1944): 57, boulevard de la Pétrusse

Villa Pauly was built in 1923 by the Luxembourg surgeon Dr Norbert Pauly and served as his home and medical practice. When the German troops occupied Luxembourg on 10 May 1940, Dr Pauly was on holiday in the south of France. On his return in late summer, he learned that his house had been confiscated by the Gestapo - the "Secret State Police". Reluctantly, he had to sign a lease agreement with them. In addition to their headquarters in the Villa Pauly, the Gestapo ran two field offices, one in Esch-Alzette and one in Diekirch.

Villa Pauly became the symbol of Nazi terror in Luxembourg: all those suspected of resisting National Socialism were interrogated here and often tortured. The vaults of the villa were used for those purposes. There were also some prison cells established. They were unfortunately not preserved after the war. Survivors report that they were hung upside down from heating pipes or beaten with a whip. After an initial violent interrogation, many prisoners had difficulty climbing the stairs from the cellar to the upper floors of the villa, which earned them kicks and further abuse. Around 1500 people suspected of resisting National Socialism were taken by the Gestapo to the SS concentration camp Hinzert near Trier. The Gestapo also organised the registration and deportation of the Jewish residents at Villa Pauly.

Walk to Place de Metz, cross the Adolphe Bridge and turn right into Rue Notre-Dame.

5 Old Synagogue: 29, rue Aldringen (Corner Rue Aldringen/ Rue Notre-Dame across from Casino)

Luxembourg's first synagogue since the expulsions of Jews in past centuries was inaugurated in 1823 and was located near the "Kaddish" Shoah memorial, inaugurated in 2018. It was replaced by the much larger synagogue opened in 1894 near Aldringer Square, opposite the Casino building on Rue Notre-Dame. This synagogue was demolished on the orders of the Nazi occupation forces between August and October 1941. Before that, it had been the target of anti-Semitic attacks several times: even before the invasion of German troops in May 1940, the building had been smeared with swastikas and anti-Semitic slogans in September 1938. At the beginning of the occupation, the windows of the synagogue were smashed several times. This meant that even Wehrmacht soldiers had to guard the synagogue for several weeks. After a failed arson attack by unknown people on 28 February 1941 failed, the synagogue was stormed during a service on 9 May 1941 by members of the *Stosstrupp* of the *Volksdeutsche Bewegung* - a Luxembourg Nazi organisation. An attack one week later on Rabbi Dr. Serebrenik in the open street by local Nazis was used as a pretext by the Germans to have the synagogue demolished for good. The search for a company that could be commissioned with the demolition work proved more difficult than expected. Eventually, a bid from the *Lucius* company was received, which at 21.000 Reichsmarks

was the cheapest of two offers. In autumn 1941, the demolition work was largely completed. The remaining stones are said to have lain on the site for several years, leading to the false assumption that the demolition stretched from 1941 to 1943.

The new Luxembourg City Synagogue is located at number 45 of Monterey Avenue and was inaugurated in 1953.

Follow Rue Notre-Dame and turn left into Rue du Fossé.
At the third intersection, first turn right into Grand-Rue
and then right towards Marché-aux-Herbes.

6 Albert Nussbaum: the Luxembourgish Emigration Helper (Nussbaum's former clothing shop "Palais de l'Habillement": 13, rue du Marché-aux-Herbes)

Albert Nussbaum was born on 4 February 1898 in Monneren, near Thionville. Shortly after his birth, the family moved to Differdange, a small town in the south of Luxembourg, where his father Gustave Nussbaum opened a textile shop. After his father passed away in 1929, the family moved to Luxembourg City, where Albert Nussbaum took over a second store called "Palais de l'Habillement" that his father had opened at 13 Krautmarkt Street (Rue du Marché-aux-Herbes). In 1935, Albert Nussbaum acquired Luxembourgish citizenship. He also became involved in the Jewish consistory and took the presidency in the 1930s. In his capacity as president of the consistory and treasurer of the ESRA, the Jewish aid committee of the consistory, Nussbaum held active exchanges with the Luxembourg Administrative Commission, a body put in place after the German invasion to serve as an interlocutor between the Luxembourg State and the German occupying force during the first six months of the occupation. This commission helped Jews leave the country. Nussbaum became an invaluable emigration organiser for Jewish residents from Luxembourg. From July 1940 onwards, the plan emerged to organise the Jewish emigration of those in possession of a visa to North or South America via Portugal. All in all, it was mainly thanks to his commitment and his efficient networking, as well as his relations with the Luxembourgish government-in-exile, that more than one thousand Jews were able to leave Luxembourg.

Walk along the Grand Ducal Palace until you reach
the Lëtzebuerg City Museum. At the intersection,
turn right onto Place de Clairefontaine and straight ahead
onto Rue de la Congrégation.

7 Location of Luxembourg's Synagogue from 1823: 6, rue de la Congrégation (then Rue du Séminaire)

In 1821, the Jewish community in Luxembourg City acquired a house in Rue du Séminaire, where they established a Synagogue. In 1823, the Synagogue was inaugurated and run by Pinhas Godchaux. It had a capacity of about 100 seats.

The Franco-Prussian War of 1870 led to a strong wave of Jewish immigration and the synagogue soon proved to be too small. The first steps towards building a new synagogue were taken as early as 1876, but it took until 1893 for the foundation stone of the new synagogue in Rue Notre-Dame to be laid. Luxembourg's synagogue from 1823 was in operation until 1894. All that remains of it is a painting by the artist and later Shoah victim Guido Oppenheim from the early 1890s, which depicts the interior of the synagogue. The building disappeared in the course of the expansion of the boarding school for girls "Sainte-Sophie". A memorial plaque in the immediate vicinity of the "Hôtel de Bourgogne" located in Rue de la Congrégation – formerly the seat of the Luxembourg Prime Minister – commemorates the synagogue and thus the revival of Jewish life in Luxembourg.

At the end of the street, turn right onto F.D. Roosevelt Boulevard.
The Kaddish Monument is on the right

8 Kaddish Monument: Boulevard Roosevelt, square in front of the former Sainte-Sophie convent

The Luxembourg Memorial for Shoah victims was inaugurated on 17 June 2018, 75 years after the last deportation of Jews from Luxembourg to the East. It commemorates the persecution, deportation and murder of Jews who lived in Luxembourg or fled from the Nazi dictatorship to Luxembourg in the late 1930s. It also commemorates the Jewish residents from Luxembourg who were deported from France and Belgium to Auschwitz and those who died in the French and Belgian anti-Nazi resistance struggle. The monument is located near the place where Luxembourg's first synagogue was situated. The sculpture in grey-pink granite was designed and made by Franco-Israeli artist Shelomo Selinger. Born in Poland in 1928, Selinger survived nine concentration camps and two death marches.

End of the tour

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